DEMOCRATIC
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"SWEDISH MODEL" FOR WEST GERMANY?

Walter Ulbricht Surveys Developments

Neutrality on Swedish lines might be a solution for some of the problems facing West Germany, Walter Ulbricht suggested in Berlin on December 5th. Walter Ulbricht, who is First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party as well as Chairman of the State Council of the GDR, was addressing a meeting of the Central Committee. In the course of his speech he dealt at length with the recent Congress of the West German Social Democratic Party, which declared itself in favour of a nuclear NATO fleet with West German participation, and stated:

"Some bourgeois commentators have suggested that Willy Brandt, the Social Democratic candidate for West German Chancellor, is in favour of adopting 'the Swedish model' in West Germany.

"There is much to be said for such a proposal, and a 'Swedish development' in West Germany would be interesting in many respects. However, the decisions of the Social Democratic Congress had quite a different flavour.

"How have the Swedish people and the Swedish Social Democrats been able to introduce important social measures for broad sections of the people? The main reason is that Sweden stayed out of the two world wars, and in fact has not taken part in a war for 150 years.

"The Swedes were clever. They have not wasted their substance in war, but provided peace, security and prosperity. It must be clear that any imitation of the Swedish model calls in the first place for a consistent policy of neutrality, and consistent renunciation of military adventures and atomic weapons. It is impossible to follow the Swedish model and at the same time to aim at participation by West Germany in a NATO multilateral nuclear force, and adopt a policy of revenge.

"But careful consideration should be given to the chances for a rapprochement between the two German states which would be provided if West Germany were to follow the Swedish model . . .

"As socialists, and as fighters for peace and unity in Germany, we are pained to see that in West Germany everything is being done to deepen the divisions in Germany. However, recent moves by many West German workers, peasants and intellectuals give us hope that the time will come when the forces of peace gain the upper hand. The decisive step must be an understanding between the workers, and above all the trade unionists of the two German states."

BONN "ATOM CURTAIN" PLANS

West German plans to change the "iron curtain" dividing the two German states into an "atom curtain" were disclosed on December 16th, when official sources in Bonn leaked the news that it is intended to bury a belt of nuclear landmines along the border between the GDR and West Germany.

Details of this multi-megaton Siegfried Line were given to the NATO Military Committee in Paris by West German Commander-in-Chief Heinrich Trettner. Trettner was a general in Hitler's Wehrmacht, and was implicated in war crimes in a number of occupied countries.

According to West German sources, the "atom curtain" should consist of a large number of nuclear landmines. To prevent accidents they should not be contact mines, but should be under remote control.

Military experts pointed out that even if all possible security devices were incorporated in the nuclear mines, their very presence in the immediate frontier area would mean that any minor frontier clash, always possible on any tense frontier, would immediately be escalated into nuclear dimensions. The whole conception of the presence of such weapons of mass destruction in the frontier area runs counter to sensible modern military planning, which has concentrated upon trying to prevent minor incidents developing into world war.

Complaints & Difficulties Aired at Central Committee Meeting

Progress in re-organising structure, planning and costing in industry in the GDR was one of the main subjects of discussion at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party held in East Berlin in December.

The re-organisation, which began early in 1964, was aimed at breaking away from out-moded methods of planning and costing. A main factor in the reform has been the introduction of new, realistic prices within industry to supersede the previous arbitrary prices involving heavy subsidies. This price reform should not affect consumer prices.

The new prices were introduced in stages, starting in April with the basic raw materials and sources of power.

Some industries were reported to have done well in coping with the new higher prices, through rationalisation, better organisation, better quality products and a more economical use of their raw material and power. But the key Leuna chemical works, for example, and the metal-working industry as a whole had still not been able fully to compensate for higher costs.

The second stage in the industrial price reform is to be introduced in January 1965; this will include non-ferrous metals and all the other main raw materials, such as wood, paper, plastics, textile raw materials etc. This means that the most complicated part of the whole reform has still to be dealt with. Whereas the first stage affected only about 300 big enterprises, the changes in 1965 will affect about 3,000.

Over-all industrial planning came in for considerable criticism at the Central Committee meeting. Delays and confusion in finishing big projects like the huge "Black Pump" soft coal combine were attributed to the fact that too many different enterprises were working more or less independently on different sections of it. Plant was sometimes old-fashioned before it was installed. Better co-ordination had been introduced here in 1964, with co-ordinating control concentrated in the hands of one main contractor. Similar changes would have to be made in all big projects.

Planning and banking problems connected with the huge sums involved in capital investment and industrial expansion were also discussed in detail. A big effort is to be made to ensure that profits are the criterion in determining the amount of money each enterprise has at its disposal for expansion, modernisation and expenditure on bonuses, social and cultural activities etc. In other words, poor production results will no longer be subsidised. The banks themselves are now expected to examine estimates of probable returns from investments, credits and loans. There was a plea, on the other hand, for bank officials to take a less "fiscal" attitude to the granting of credits; a number of out-moded banking regulations which prevented officials from using their own judgment would also have to be changed, and training would have to be on a much higher level, so that people working in banks would become "banking economists", and no longer simply clerks and cashiers mainly concerned with conventional bookkeeping and balancing of accounts.

Foreign currency credits were granted to exporting firms for the first time in 1964. It is estimated that credits totalling 600,000 marks resulted in additional exports and foreign currency profits of about 2.5 million marks.

The biggest sum ever will be invested in the building industry in 1965. This will severely tax the capacity of all enterprises producing for the building industry. Much more attention will have to be concentrated on standardising and pre-fabrication, especially in putting up hotels, residential blocks, schools, shops and farm buildings. April 30th 1965 is the date fixed for delivery by the German Building Academy of plans for standardised extensions to existing schools and new four-storey school buildings, creches and nursery schools. These plans have been approved by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Health had objected to some aspects of the latest designs for combined creches and nursery schools already built in Schwedt and Berlin. In these new three-storey buildings a reduction in building costs had been achieved by reducing the height of rooms from the customary 3.30 metres to 2.80 metres; this makes it impossible to build balconies, since they would make the rooms too dark. On the other hand, there are no lifts. The time taken to get 32 tiny tots up and down the three flights of stairs for their walks is as much as 1 hour and 20 minutes a day, so that in winter especially they do not get their proper ration of fresh air.

Improved plans for shops and big stores are to be completed by June 30th this year. Standardised plans for cattle, pig and poultry stalls and for storage buildings are already available, but actual building must be speeded up; there has been a tendency to neglect the supply of building materials to rural areas, and even to divert materials from rural to industrial areas.

The main problem which emerged from the discussion on farming was that of improving the soil. Agricultural expert Professor Rübensam stressed that in many places more was still being taken out of the soil than was being put into it. Some good work in liming and fertilising had been done, for example in Schwerin district, but elsewhere there had been a tendency to concentrate on mechanisation at the expense of soil conservancy. He urged that all 1965 farming plans should include detailed ameliorisation plans. Irrigation and drainage would also have to be improved. It was well known that this kind of work could be done comparatively cheaply, but it was being held up for no adequate reason.

Speakers agreed that over-all production in arable and dairy farming had improved, but that two-thirds of the state farms and LPGs were still far ahead of the rest. There was also sharp criticism of the quality and freshness of products reaching retail shops.

A number of educational problems were brought up, including the re-vetting of school syllabuses in science subjects and languages and improvements in polytechnical education so as to co-ordinate it more closely with school life. Much still has to be done to help children to choose their vocational training courses, and they are not yet being clearly informed about the careers which offer the best prospects. More opportunities for vocational training will have to be offered in the key industries.

A big difficulty has arisen lately in connection with the too rigid distinction between rural and industrial vocational training. Industry is in many places expanding into the surrounding country-side (the Leuna works, for instance, is expanding into the Weissenfels area), and rural children now leaving ten-year high school have had exclusively agricultural training, although large numbers of them are going into industry. It is therefore planned to send more children to train in repair stations, various kinds of workshops and smaller factories, and to revise rural vocational training so as to include a considerable amount of technical training.

Another point noted was the difficulty which some enterprises had in coping with large numbers of school-age children; they would in many cases have to regard this part of their work as a long-term investment which might not necessarily benefit them directly.

An entirely new civics programme was introduced in September 1964. It now included elementary social science and political economy with examples from daily life in socialist society.

There was criticism of a continuing tendency for parents and teachers to prefer "obedient" children who asked no questions. Intelligent children wanted to work things out for themselves; what they needed was a feeling that they could get help when they asked for it, one speaker at the Central Committee meeting urged.

BONN SMOKESCREENS NAZI CRIMINAL SCANDAL

Alarmed by world protests at plans to end the prosecution of all nazi war criminals in May next year, the West German Government went into frantic action in December to try and confuse the issue.

On December 9th the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats, the two largest parties in the West German Parliament, supported a motion calling upon the Government to "make systematic efforts" to clarify quickly the question of the nazi criminals still unarraigned before the Statute of Limitations, which would end all prosecutions, comes into effect in May 1965. The West German Government was urged to report back by March 1st 1965 whether these belated "systematic efforts" had been successful.

This parliamentary motion was obviously designed to assuage public opinion abroad, since the three-month period is obviously too short for much serious work to be done on this intricate problem. When the Government reports back in March it will then be able to claim that there is no longer time enough before May to pass legislation supending the Statute of Limitations in cases of nazi murder.

Before the parliamentary debate, the West German Government had attempted to evade its responsibility by claiming that it had no access to important nazi files held in other countries and appealing for such files to be handed over. The authorities in the GDR pointed out that for years it had been offering the West German authorities access to nazi files held in the GDR, but that except in a few isolated cases no advantage had been taken of this offer.

"The Times" of London reported on December 9th:

"The Federal Government is now emphasising that it is up to governments and organisations abroad to hand over documents in their possession. It suspects that the communist countries of eastern Europe will not comply with Bonn's request for political reasons, and it seems prepared to write off the east German regime.

"It is not accepted international practice for governments to send documents from state archives abroad — and Jewish or east European organisations may have particular reservations about dispatching such material to Germany. Yet the Bonn appeal did not say that the Federal Government was prepared to send lawyers to other countries to inspect documents or to finance the preparation of copies.

"Although substantial efforts have been made by the west German authorities through the Ludwigsburg centre for the investigation of nazi crimes, no one can even estimate how many nazi criminals have managed to escape justice . . .

"Official suggestions that the number can only be small are not shared by lawyers who have specialised in such work. The Ludwigsburg centre, it is pointed out, has worked through only parts of the nazi bureaucracy. The SS administrative and economic offices, the Führer's Chancery, and the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Eastern Affairs, and Transport during the Third Reich have still not been investigated in detail."

The Remarkable Case of SS Lieutenant Teubner

The Bonn Government has appealed blandly to the world for incriminating material on nazi criminals so that it may deal with them before the Statute of Limitations comes into operation in May 1965.

The way in which the West German authorities deal with such material as is available to them is shown by the case of SS Lieutenant Teubner, today a prosperous citizen of Memmingen near Munich.

After the nazi attack on the Soviet Union, Teubner was in charge of a travelling workshop in the Ukraine. He opened there his private extermination campaign against the Jews, and killed, without any orders, 900 of them between September and November 1941: 319 in Zviahel, 191 in Sholokhovo, and 459 in Alexandria. His victims included men, women and children, and he made a photographic record of his crimes.

These figures were officially cited by an SS court on May 24th 1943, for Teubner was, oddly enough, arraigned before a nazi court for his crimes. With Prussian pedantry the court laid down that Teubner had been guilty of military disobedience; although he had not been ordered to slaughter Jews he had done so.

The judgement of the court is so hair-raising that it deserves quotation:

"The accused should not be punished for his action against the Jews as such. The Jews must be destroyed; there can be no regret for a single one of the Jews killed. The accused should have considered that the liquidation of the Jews was the task of special squads, but it should be counted in his favour that he had believed himself authorised to take part in the liquidation of the Jews."

The senior SS judge who handed down this shocking judgement, Günther Reinicke, is today practicing as a court lawyer in Munich.

Teubner was sentenced to five years imprisonment, but soon amnestied by Hitler. After the war he settled in Memmingen. In 1959 the local prosecutor, after long delays, filed murder charges against him. The Memmingen Court refused to open proceedings, stating that it would be unconstitutional to try a man twice for the same offence, thus exposing him to double jeopardy. The decision of the Memmingen Court was confirmed by the senior court in Munich.

The Warsaw Pact & East Germany

By H. Paul Simon

(The author of this article, reprinted in a condensed form from the Canadian review "Queen's Quarterly" of Autumn 1964, is a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.)

The Warsaw Pact, linking the Soviet Union with its East European allies, was concluded on May 14th 1955, nine days after the accession of the Federal Republic of (West) Germany to the North Atlantic Treaty. To understand this 'reply' to the policy of the Western Powers — as the NATO handbook itself terms it — we must see the events in their proper historical sequence. When we do, it will become clearer that it was the East that reacted to challenges from the West, ever since the last stages of the war against Germany.

(Mr. Simon then gives an extended summary of events in defeated Germany in 1945, the breach between the eastern and western partners in the war-time alliance, and the beginning of the Cold War.)

The myth of the Soviet threat to Western Europe had most of us believe that a country exhausted and decimated from war . . . was ready to push towards the Atlantic and the Channel. The myth, notwithstanding our professed inability to know what was going on behind the Iron Curtain, assumed arithmetically precise proportions: even Paul Henri Spaak signed his name to a claim that 200 Soviet divisions were poised for their dash to the West. Subsequently the scale was reduced to some 175 divisions, without stated reason.

There never was any such number of divisions facing the central front in Germany, other than during the final struggle against Germany. But not until November 18th 1963 did Robert McNamara confirm the facts:

> "In Central Europe, NATO has more men, and more combat troops on the ground than does the Bloc. It has more men on the ground in West Germany than the Bloc does in East Germany . . . Recent intensive investigation has shown that the number of active Soviet divisions that are maintained at manning levels anywhere near combat readiness is less than half of the 160—175 figure. What remains is a large number, but even that is misleading. For one thing, US divisions have about twice as many men in the divisional unit and its immediate combat supporting units as comparable Soviet divisions." (Speech before the Economic Club of New York)

(Mr. Simon then gives detailed figures to show that at the end of 1963 the NATO forces stationed in West Germany totalled roughly twice the strength of the Soviet and GDR forces in the GDR.)

The table indicates that the total NATO forces in the Central Sector are just about in balance with the total Warsaw Pact forces, in a wider area of Central Europe. To judge the adequacy of this situation, we must pursue our analysis: what is the purpose of these NATO forces? If it is for defence, under conditions of nuclear war, then the NATO war games rulebook states that in an atomic war, one division should hold a front-width of 25 kilometres . . . For 650 kilometres we would need a target level of 26 NATO divisions, and we already have 27 plus.

Now let us assume a purely conventional clash: the rulebook states this requires one division per 12 kilometres of frontline. For this purpose then, we would need some 55 divisions. Or would we? For if we are there to defend, rule number two applies, which says that for defence one can allow one's own forces to face twice their number. The distinguished British military analyst Liddell Hart suggests a 1 : 3 ratio. In that case, therefore, we need only 6.5 NATO-strength divisions. Or, if we wish to speculate on the possibilities that this would offer, we could disarm the Germans (once again), and leave the US Seventh Army to guard the gate, or we could all pull out and tell the West Germans to demobilise half their present strength.

The military lunacy of the present situation in the Central Sector shows up in every NATO exercise in West Germany: the forces lack space for proper manoeuvring, and the Bundeswehr has to ship its tanks by sea to Wales for exercises; it did not pursue its request for space in Spain, but is erecting supply depots in France — presumably to support its present 'forward' strategy towards the East. Clearly, NATO's problem is not to add to what it already has, but to decide what to do with what it already has in surplus . . .

(Mr. Simon examines some political problems at issue between East and West, including Berlin and the Oder-Neisse frontier, and then turns to the economic aspects of the Warsaw Pact countries.)

Economically speaking, things have not been easy for the Warsaw Pact countries. More devastated than the countries of Western Europe, not, like West Germany, the recipients of vast Marshall Plan aid (Bonn alone received some 4 billion), it has been a bootstrap effort all the way. The economies of the seven countries are now guided by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, known as Comecon.

The Economics department of Barclays Bank Limited reported in

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1963 that payment difficulties in this market are unknown, and that industrialisation is proceeding rapidly. The United Kingdon exports some £500 million per year into this market. Even West Germany, which tries to blacklist East Germany and all countries that recognise it diplomatically, trades with it to the tune of £1 billion per year.

The annual Leipzig Trade Fair is getting increased attention from West European firms. At the March 1962 fair, 271 UK firms were represented, along with 626 West German firms, 68 from West Berlin, and others from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Japan.

De-Nazification seems complete; one doesn't hear of prominent ex-Nazis turning up in high East German Government posts, as in West Germany.

East Germany is now among the ranking industrial powers in the world. With a population below that of Canada, with few natural resources other than brown coal, without massive capital inflow, the country has yet pulled itself up to this level, in spite of heavy reparations to the USSR, from which West Germany was largely exempted. A vast chemical industry has been built, new harbours are being completed on the Baltic, in a traditionally economic backwater of Germany. A large shipbuilding industry flourishes, and is giving increasingly keen competition to Hamburg's shipyards. East Germany is extending a considerable aid-program to African countries. In short, East Germany is here to stay. The young generation supplants the old, and the regime likewise gains in stability . . .

The Warsaw Pact was a reaction to what the East considered to be provocation by the West. The Pact gave formal recognition to the East's fear of invasion from the West throughout history . . .

The Pact recognised the context of the Cold War, but not until all alternatives had been offered in vain, including that of a nationally confederated Germany, with its own national army, but free from NATO ties, a proposal rejected outright by the late Foster Dulles, before consulting any NATO allies, in 1955. The Pact answered territorial claims by high officials in the Bundesregierung; it observed Nazis in high posts (as until today), but most of all, it recognised that there would be no outlet for West Germany's armed might to the West, but only to the East . . .

We shall have to realise that there will be no final solution to the German problem that does not both guarantee the Soviets against a reunited Germany getting nuclear arms, in whatever form, and also satisfy the Germans in their self-determination.

We cannot hope to talk the Soviets out of East Germany; we cannot force them out without war. The only solution which meets both of the primary requirements as stated is that of disengagement in Central Europe. The military facts of the situation would allow such a move. The real question is about our own psychological readiness.

GDR POLICY IS CLEAR

By Professor Albert Norden, Member of the Politbureau of the Socialist Unity Party

Our policy is clear: we have been, are, and remain, the pioneers of an understanding between the two German states, rapprochement and finally unification. We struggle consistently for a policy which will overcome the division of Germany, although such a reunification is not a necessary condition for a good life for our population, and for a further economic, social and cultural growth of the German Democratic Republic. Even without reunification we shall be able to complete the construction of socialism and proceed to build communism.

We are now framing our long-range plans up to 1970, and in broad outlines our plans until 1980; the Friendship Treaty between the GDR and the Soviet Union (of June 1964, ed.) strengthens our economic foundations and provides us with security against any imperialist aggression.

Our prime national task is to secure peace for the entire German people, and to bring about an understanding in the German working class and all democratic forces on the shape which the new, peaceful, democratic and progressive Germany should take. The basic question of the maintenance of peace must form the foundation for all the detailed questions connected with reunification.

The policy of nuclear arms for the Bonn Bundeswehr forms the core of imperialist war preparations, and would harden the partitioning of Germany for an indefinite period; we oppose this policy with our struggle for peace, and our policy of the democratic path to German reunification.

Under no circumstances will there be a reunification on the terms of monopoly capitalism, revanche policy and militarism. Reunification must be peaceful and democratic, or there will be no reunification. The only alternative to a peaceful and democratic reunification would be a frightful civil war, probably as part of a world war. Such a war would not unite Germany but would blot it out biologically.

The national interests of Germans in both East and West can only allow for a reunification which guarantees that war shall never again start from German soil; that shall cause no unrest in Europe or the world; that does not endanger the frontiers of other countries; and that bans the bomb, decreases armaments, and makes possible complete disarmament in Germany.

The West German workers and all democratic forces there have the task of changing basically the conditions in the German Federal Republic; nobody else can do this for them. For our part we shall make our contribution to the unification of the German states by ensuring the speedy development of the economic and cultural life of the GDR.

The root of the German problem is that German imperialism plunged our nation into two world wars, split the nation, and is now preparing for civil war and a Third World War. To ensure peace and overcome the partitioning of Germany, German imperialism must be swept away. Anybody who dreams of a 'third path' must be told that no concession towards German imperialism can ever bring a solution of the German problem; it can only lead to catastrophe.

(from a speech to GDR journalists on December 11th)

Nazi Army Judge Gets Top Post

The West German Parliament appointed a top nazi military judge to the post of "civil commissioner for the armed forces" on December 11th.

The new civil commissioner, Matthias Hoogen of the Christian Democratic Union, has the task of ensuring that the West German Bundeswehr is "properly democratic". Hoogen joined the Nazi Party in 1933, but claims that he left it one year later. His disagreement with nazism does not appear to have been very basic, since he rose during the Second World War to the rank of Senior Military Court Judge, in which position he sentenced Wehrmacht soldiers to death for disciplinary offences.

Previous West German civil commissioners have always been forced to retire before their appointment period ended. The first civil commissioner had to retire when he was involved in a morals charge; the second, Ex-Admiral Hellmuth Heye, submitted his resignation in November after he had been under concentrated fire for making a public statement that the Bundeswehr was becoming "a state within the state . . . trained in the spirit of yesterday".

The West Berlin newspaper "Telegraf" sharply criticised on December 15th Hoogen's appointment as civil commissioner for the armed forces. The paper addressed an open letter to the new commissioner, stating:

"Five days ago the Federal Parliament elected you civil commissioner. You have held this office five days too long.

"You are unfit to hold this high appointment. Not because you were a member of the Nazi Party at a time when honest democrats were suffering and dying for their convictions; not because you were a military judge; and not because you applied illegal laws. You are unsuitable because you were a coward, because, according to your own admission, you demanded 'on superior orders' a death sentence which was carried out.

"In a recent interview you stated that you could not remember imposing any death sentences. You recall, however, a case in which you as military judge tried a soldier on desertion charges, but sentenced him to a lesser punishment for absence without leave. The decision was upset by the Luftwaffe commander: in the new trial you were not judge but prosecutor, and in this capacity your submission to the court was: 'On superior orders I call for the death sentence'.

"How can any member of the Bundeswehr have confidence in you? When you had already reached years of discretion you were not only a member of a party hostile to democracy, but in your careerism you showed cowardice, and helped to end at least one life.

"We write intentionally 'at least one life'. Perhaps your memory is at fault? It is perhaps significant that the biographical details you give in the Parliamentary Handbook and Who's Who contain no details of your activities during the nazi period. Had you just forgotten, or was it a case of bad conscience?

"You were very careful when you stated in the interview 'There can be no incriminating material against me'. You spoke of what you could recall. Resign now, before other people recall more."

Book Review

"Behind the Berlin Wall" by Bernard Newman. Robert Hale, London, 1964

If an auther writes a number of books on the same subject, he is almost bound to repeat himself a little, but Mr Newman has overdone it. His book "Behind the Berlin Wall" consists to a considerable degree of a straight reprint of one of his previous volumes, "The Three Germanies", put out by the same publishing house in 1957.

He might be excused for reprinting his previous summaries about the ancient history of Berlin, or developments in the early post-war years, but his sense of economy goes too far when he retails all over again, page after page of rather dreary funny stories about Walter Ulbricht, activists, and how clever Bernard Newman is.

When I started to read the volume I began by jotting down Mr Newman's crasser factual mistakes, but I soon abandoned the task; a full listing would demand a whole new volume, and Mr Newman's concoction is not worth the trouble.

On page 40 I found that Mr Newman had managed to drag me in, without naming me. The story, for what it is worth, goes like this:

Late in 1952 Mr Newman published an article in a number of British newspapers making some allegations about "rearmament in East Germany" which he claimed to have noted during a visit to the GDR.

At that time practically no foreign journalists or tourists were given visas to visit the GDR, so I challenged Mr Newman in the columns of GERMAN REPORT on December 19th 1952. I pointed out that earlier he had published a number of books claiming to have been a British spy, and suggested that he had either visited the GDR illegally, or that his visit was imaginary.

A few weeks later I received a letter from Mr Newman claiming that he had been smuggled into the GDR by people whom he could not name because "I have no wish to be the cause of their being expelled from the Party".

I had long forgotten the rather fruitless exchange, but it obviously still rankles with Mr Newman, for in his book under review he takes me severely to task:

"In 1950 I was in East Berlin when I met an old acquaintance . . .

"He drove me out into the countryside; as we passed through a small town, we were held up by a parade. Here were about 2,000 men in blue uniforms, each carrying a tommy-gun . . .

"Some time after my return home I was writing an article for the 'Daily Telegraph' on conditions in East Germany. Naturally I included a paragraph on the troops I had seen on parade.

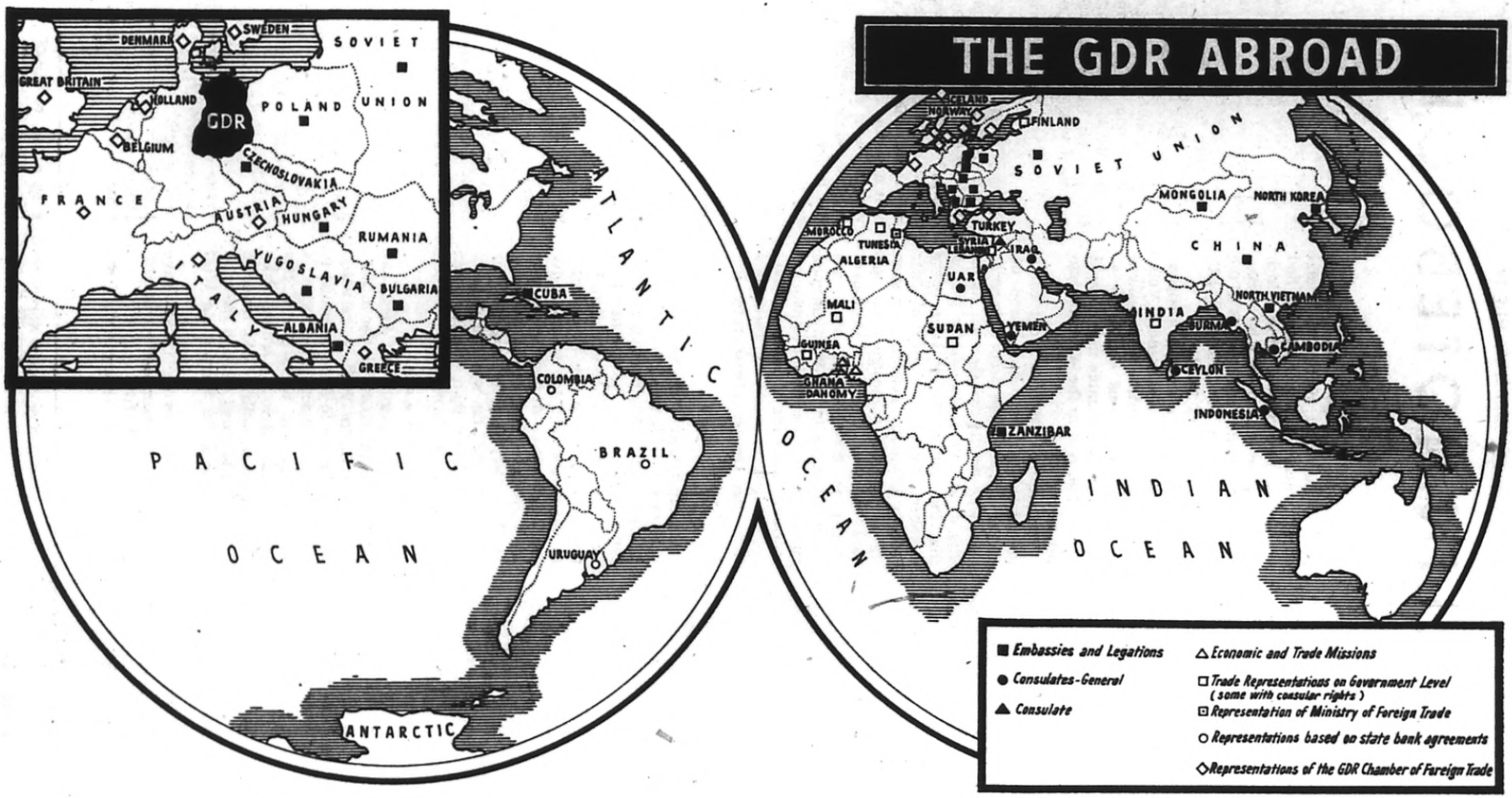
"At that time, as now, East Berlin issued a monthly 'news sheet' in English, edited by an Englisman. Now this man took me severely to task. I was a fool. The men I saw were not soldiers, but police. I was also a liar.

"He invited me to reply to his accusations, which I did — but of course he did not print my comments. It is true that I had no visa, but I had been escorted by a man who was above visas. For that matter, I have made several such journeys."

Reference to my original article shows that I never suggested that Mr Newman was a fool, as he claims; and there was no trace of argument between us about "police" or "soldiers".

I suggested that Mr Newman had visited the GDR illegally if he had visited it at all; and Mr Newman, both in his 1953 letter and his 1964 book, confirmed that he had done so.

John Peet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INDONESIA
ZANZIBAR
INDIAN OCEAN
Embassies and Legations
Consulates-General
Consulate
Economic and Trade Missions
Trade Representations on Government Level (some with consular rights)
Representation of Ministry of Foreign Trade
Representations based on state bank agreements
Representations of the GDR Chamber of Foreign Trade

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

On another page of this issue we deal with the zig-zag policy of confusion being pursued by the West German authorities in connection with the Statute of Limitations, under which nazi crimes will no longer be liable to prosecution after May 1965.

One of the main items in the cloak of confusion spread by the West German authorities has been the claim that they would really love to prosecute nazi criminals while they still have the chance, but that the wicked East Germans are holding back the evidence.

There is one main and convincing answer to this claim: for the past six or seven years the GDR authorities have regularly offered West German official investigators full facilities to inspect the old nazi files held in the GDR. In a few isolated cases West German prosecutors have taken advantage of the offer, but by and large the opportunity has been ignored. In addition, the GDR authorities have handed over masses of photostats of particularly incriminating documents; in almost all cases these documents have been ignored.

But there is another angle to the case too. In very many cases the old nazi files held in the GDR only make sense if they are studied in conjunction with the files in West Germany, and to some extent in West Berlin, and the lack of any proper coooperation between East and West, due to West German reluctance, makes this difficult.

Let me give you just one minor example of the difficulty of digging up the facts about a nazi criminal. Early in 1963, a GDR researcher inspected some very dull files from the personnel department of the Nazi Ministry of the Interior. They dealt simply with promotions and transfers of minor officials. One name seemed familiar: it was the moderately unusual name Volkmar Hopf.

Turning up a modern reference work, the researcher saw that a man of the same name was today State Secretary in the Bonn Defence Ministry.

A comparison of birth dates showed that the two men were identical, and the dull nazi file suddenly became interesting. There was nothing of interest on Hopf in the file itself, but it showed where he had worked during the nazi period, and local files might be more productive.

And sure enough, buried in the files of the rural district of Franzburg, where Volkmar Hopf had worked in 1938, was a letter which he had signed consigning a local man to concentration camp. (Details of the case were given in GERMAN REPORT of April 5th 1963)

In this case there would not appear to be enough evidence to indict Volkmar Hopf on war crimes charges; but it does raise serious doubts as to whether he is a suitable man to hold a very high post in the West German Government.

The case of Volkmar Hopf could undoubtedly have been cleared up earlier if there were proper cooperation between the two German states. One of the main reasons for this is that the central file of Nazi Party members, giving full details of their records, obviously essential for such jig-saw puzzle reconstructions, are held in the American Document Centre in West Berlin. They are freely available to the West German authorities, who appear to make remarkably little use of them; but they are strictly barred to researchers from the German Democratic Republic.

* * *

On November 27th, relying on a note in the GDR press, we reported that the Sistine Madonna, the greatest art treasure of the Dresden Galleries, was to be loaned to Japan. We now learn that the lady is regarded as too fragile, and too valuable, for the long voyage. And since we have to correct the fact, let us apologise at the same time for spelling her name "Sixtine", the way it is done in German, rather than "Sistine", the normal English form.

* * *

There have luckily not been any fatalities on the GDR frontier in Berlin — the Berlin Wall — recently, but I would like to draw attention to another recent shooting in Berlin. A fourteen-year-old West Berlin boy was shot and seriously wounded by an American sentry who detected him trying to crawl through the wire surrounding a US barracks in West Berlin.

The West Berlin conservative newspaper "Tagesspiegel" commented on December 11th:

"The American sentry simply did his duty when he directed an aimed shot at the intruder, who could not be recognised as a child, after calling upon him to halt and firing warning shots."

Quite. The sentry carried out his normal duty of protecting a closed zone. The area along the Berlin Wall is also a clearly marked prohibited zone, only to be passed, with prescribed papers, at the prescribed points. If an intruder is detected, he is called upon to halt, warning shots are fired, and if not complied with, aimed fire is opened. But if an intruder is hit, there is no such sensible comment in the western press.

* * *

The longing for statistical neatness sometimes comes into conflict with the facts of life. The statisticians who decided that the GDR should hold a general census on December 31st 1964 were undoubtedly moved by the idea that a census on the last day of the year is much more logical than one held on some arbitrary date during the course of the year; but I must say it looks to me as though the decision was taken by a computer rather than by human beings.

Even statisticians must have heard rumours that in the German Democratic Republic, as in many other countries, New Years's Eve is a notably alcoholic festival. I have horrid visions of millions of well-lit worthy GDR citizens struggling to complete the complicated census forms in the intervals of downing brimming glasses of punch and letting off the firecrackers which form the second main element of German Hogmany jollity.

Luckily perhaps, the German language does not lend itself to the classic English census answer: "Sex?: Yes".

* * *

The next issue of GERMAN REPORT will be published on January 22nd. The massing of extended Christmas and New Year holidays, not to mention the work involved in filling in the census forms, makes it impracticable to get the paper out earlier.

* * *

The West German trade union newspaper "Welt der Arbeit" broke new ground on December 4th with a full-page advertisement for, of all things, champagne. I have no idea what this proves, if anything.

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